

REMARKS

The applicants have now followed the contours of the June 6, 2006 office action, thereby placing the claims of the application in condition for immediate allowance. In the office action, the examiner stated the following, on page 8:

“Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-9, 15 and 16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.”

The applicants fully concur with the examiner’s observation concerning the allowability of claims 6-9, 15 and 16. Accordingly, claims 5 and 6 have been folded into independent claim 1, thereby placing claim 1 in condition for allowance. Thus, claims 2 and 3 that depend from claim 1 should likewise be allowable.

Dependent claim 7 has been rewritten as independent claim 19. Claims 8 and 9 that depended from claim 7 have been amended to depend from new claim 19. Claim 15 that depends from claim 9, and claim 16 that depends from claim 15, should likewise be allowable.

Claims 10-14, and 17-18 have now been canceled from the application.

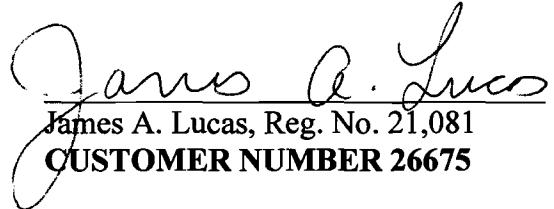
Applicants respectfully submit that the claims now in the application are clearly distinguishable over the teachings of the cited and applied prior art. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of independent claim 1, and claims 2-3 that depend from claim 1 as well as new independent claim 19, and claims 8, 9, 15 and 16 that depend directly or indirectly there from, is respectfully requested.

Although the applicants have canceled numerous claims in order to place the application in condition for immediate allowance, the cancellation of these claims is not necessarily an acceptance of the examiner’s contention regarding the allowability of the canceled claims. Accordingly, the applicants reserve the right to continue the prosecution of the canceled claims in one or more continuation applications.

In the event there are issues remaining that the examiner believes can be expeditiously resolved by email or telephone, applicants request that he contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 28, 2006


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JAL:cg